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ABSTRACT

The Comer School Development Program is a reform model aimed at creating a positive school climate. Research has confirmed that specific Comer characteristics, such as an orderly, well-maintained facility, classroom diversity, and staff friendliness, can be observed. This study uses the Comer Visitor Observation instrument to determine whether positive climate can be observed. Data from nine elementary schools (three high-implementing, three low-implementing, and three control) in the San Diego Unified School District showed that climate definitely varied among schools. The schools were observed by five different researchers unaware of each school's status. Findings indicated that schools could be correctly identified as high, low, or control through direct observation. When Comer surveys and Comer Visitor Observation instruments were distributed to parents, teachers, and staff, their responses did not correlate as highly as researchers' direct observations. From these mixed results, it is important to realize that school climate fluctuates yearly, due to variables such as administrative support, influx of new teachers not trained in the Comer School Development Program, and lack of on-going training. High-implementing Comer schools that continue to educate parents, staff, and students have a better chance for maintaining a desirable, achievement-oriented school climate. Included are tables and sample study questionnaires. Contains 7 references and a 14-item bibliography. (MLH)

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COMER SCHOOLS: ARE THEY RECOGNIZABLE THROUGH DIRECT OBSERVATION?

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA, April 13-17, 1998

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Abstract

The Comer School Development Program is a school reform model that, in full implementation, creates positive school climate. The research has confirmed that this can be observed. Specific characteristics of this climate should be intrinsic in all Comer schools. One would expect to see a school that is well-maintained, free from trash, graffiti, or broken windows; one that appears orderly, has child-centered banners, and bulletin boards displaying the Comer principles. Classrooms would show evidence of ethnic and cultural diversity, and teachers would show a variety of instructional methods. A high implementing Comer school would have a parent or community room and information board. The atmosphere of the school would be friendly as evidenced by students, and staff welcoming visitors with eye contact and smiles. These attributes should be visible to students, parents, and staff.

This study uses an instrument called the Comer Visitor Observation to determine whether or not positive climate can be observed. Data showed that school climate definitely varied among schools. It was obvious to the researchers which school were the control schools. One of the schools was particularly unfriendly and did not even allow the researchers to enter the classrooms. The schools were observed by five different researchers, unaware of the school's status. Nine schools were chosen; three were high implementing Comer, three low and three control schools. The researchers did not know the designation of any of the schools. Individual surveys were recorded for each school by the researchers. A collective mean was calculated. Findings indicated that the schools could be correctly identified as high, low, or control through direct observation.

The concept was further developed using the Comer Surveys distributed to parents, teachers, and students. Common questions from the Comer Surveys and the Comer Visitor Observation were correlated. Parent, teacher, and staff responses did not correlate as highly as the direct observation. Teacher responses correlated significantly with the questions of community and parent involvement. Frequent parent involvement on special projects was the single most important item in identifying the school as a Comer school.

While all the above listed characteristics did in fact make it possible for the researchers to identify the high implementing Comer schools, it became evident through the Comer Surveys distributed to parents, staff, and students, that it was not overwhelmingly obvious that a school was practicing the Comer principle. It is important to realize that school climate fluctuates from year to year because of variables such as administrative support, influx of new teachers not trained in the Comer School Development Program, and lack of on-going training for all. High implementing Comer Schools that continue to educate parents, staff, and students have a better chance for maintaining the desired positive school climate, characteristic of Comer schools, that can lead to improved student achievement.

Introduction

What is a Comer School? Can you identify a Comer School through observation, or by touring the campus? Are there specific characteristics that should be in place that can add to positive school climate? Do parents, students and staff recognize these components? These are some questions that will be answered in this study.

Considering the current wave of school reform models, and the emphasis on improving student achievement, the Comer model is one that cannot be overlooked. Comer's principles focus on the child and the comprehensive support group. This support group includes parents, staff and community members. Studies show that when learning conditions at the school are optimal, or school climate is ideal, the child can achieve to the best of his or her ability. The researchers reasoned that when the climate is ideal, it should be visible. One should see specific characteristics of school climate, feel a welcoming atmosphere, observe a diverse instructional program, and see evidence of parent and community involvement.

These characteristics were tested through observations of nine selected schools. A survey instrument, named the Comer Visitor Observation, was developed by the researchers to measure what they felt should be observed in an ideal high implementing Comer school. The questions were developed from the original Comer Survey used by the San Diego Unified School District. The questions were chosen for their observability at the schools. San Diego Unified School District personnel assisted in identifying the nine schools to observe: three high implementing Comer Schools, three low implementing Comer schools, and three control schools. The status of the schools was anonymous to the five researchers. The goal was for all five to observe the nine schools, filling out an observation survey for each. The data would be collected and compared to see if the observations verified the high, low and control groups. Secondly, the researchers matched questions from the Comer Visitor Observation with those from the Comer surveys. In the Comer surveys, parents, teachers, and students responded to the school climate questions based on their personal experiences at the school. These two sets of data were then correlated to see their relationship.

Part of the definition of a Comer school is one with a comfortable atmosphere and a school climate that allows for optimal learning for all students. If these positive school climate characteristics could be observed by looking at a school for less than an hour, and school climate surveys confirmed this notion, then it is evident that the school is following this aspect of the model as defined by the Comer School Development Program. Optimally, parents, teachers, and students will feel this positive sense of community and collaborate as a cohesive team to the shared goal of increased student achievement.

Review of Literature

The Comer School Development Program (SDP) has been successful in improving urban schools because of it's emphasis on systemic change, child development, and parent involvement. The program is a nine element process model of three mechanisms, three operations, and three guidelines that replaces traditional organization and management (Haynes & Comer, 1993). While other school reform models focus on either enriching curriculum development or emphasizing cognitive practices that increase learning, the Comer program emphasizes improved school climate (Zimmerman, 1993).

Can a person just walking through the school for an informal observation tell that the school is practicing a Comer philosophy? What does the school climate look like? School climate is a term used often to describe the atmosphere of a school. Defining school climate, however, can be overwhelming to the researchers because of the wide range of assumptions and concepts involved. Wilbur Brookover's conception of school climate as the composite of norms, expectations, and beliefs which characterize the school social system as perceived by members of the social system (Colemen, 1984), is broad based. Similarly, The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) developed a task force, named in 1982, that defined school climate as "the relatively permanent and enduring pattern of shared perceptions (of teachers, students, and community members) of the characteristics of a school and of its members, i.e., the enduring perceptions of the culture of the school" (Kelley, 1989, p. 3).

James Comer further exemplifies school climate by encouraging "schools to provide an environment that stimulates the orderliness, respectful relationships, and the school-centered planning that are prerequisites for teaching and learning" (Comer; et al, 1991, p. 82).
This leads to the description of a Comer School that is child-centered, nurturing, self-sustaining, and encompassing. In schools, then, that are high implementing Comer schools, we would expect to perceive visual indications of this philosophy, as well as feel the welcoming atmosphere of which James Comer speaks.

Carolyn Anderson, in 1982, identified four categories of variables of school climate: ecology (physical variables), milieu (characteristics of individuals in the school), social system (patterns or rules of operating and interacting in the school), and culture (variables that reflect norms, belief systems, values, cognitive structures, and attitudes of persons within the school). Following Anderson's delineations, focus on specific observable traits, that may signify a more comprehensive positive school climate, can be studied.

The first category, 'ecology' of the school environment (Anderson, 1982), is most important for the purpose of this study, and includes such physically observable characteristics as hall activity, broken windows or doors, chipping paint, graffiti, trash, gardening, child centered banners, Comer bulletin boards, parent or community information boards and room, orderly classes and safe-looking playgrounds. The outward appearance of the school building and grounds affect this variable of school climate.

The next category of school climate, 'milieu' (Anderson, 1982), is established through the collection of ethnicity, socioeconomic background, achievement levels, and other factors relating to the school's specific population. "Children of different ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds should feel safe and respected by their peers who come from different backgrounds (Comer; et al, 1991, p.75). These elements can promote a positive school climate and, as Comer believes, when children feel personally secure and affirmed, they are better able to treat others with similar consideration; creating an atmosphere of collaboration and congeniality. In observing this, we may see multicultural posters, children of various ethnic backgrounds playing together, or mixed cooperative groups in the classroom.

Thirdly, the 'social system' and it's implications for order and behavioral expectations, can influence the school environment or climate. When these rules are set in place with clear rewards and consequences, a peaceful atmosphere can be witnessed. "Learning and teaching cannot take place in schools that are not orderly and safe" (Editorial Projects in Education Inc., 1997).

Finally, the culture that reflects the beliefs and attitudes existing within a school (Anderson, 1982) sets the tone for the school. In this aspect of school climate, rapport is developed in relationships between students, parents, staff, and administrators. An article published by Editorial Projects in Education Inc. (1997) states students perform better in schools where teachers take the time to plan and work together. The continuous and consistent cooperation enables staff and administrators to begin to identify obstacles of implementation and then to develop benchmarks to monitor progress (Gottfredson, 1987). When teamwork like this is exhibited, the culture of the school becomes one that is productive and child-centered. The importance of this essential link between cooperation and communication occurs in most research studies. The friendliness of the students and staff, including the office personnel, can visibly show a cohesive family unit.

Other researchers found school climate to be influenced by three elements: principal leadership, faculty collegiality, and student discipline (Taylor, 1994). Still other studies show that schools with higher levels of parent/community involvement and principals with 'promoter' styles may be major contributors to students' achievement (Bulach, 1994). Specific research conducted over the last decade has consistently shown a link between positive school climate and other important measurements of school success: academic achievement, high morale, staff productivity, and effective management. We know that children learn best when they are in a caring, supportive environment. It is apparent that many structures must function together to enable the school climate to be a healthy, positive environment in which children flourish.

Lengthy documents continue to be written to define school climate. The question then became, is there a set of observable standards that would identify positive school climate? Few studies have been performed to observe the physical characteristics of a school to identify it with positive school climate and, therefore, high implementation of this aspect of the Comer principles. Because the School Development Program is not a curriculum based model, however, but more a management strategy and belief system, the question posed is how does one know when a school has implemented and is practicing the Comer School Development Program? Can you tell, by direct observation, which schools are in this category? This study set forth to do just that.

Method

Subjects

Nine elementary school sites in the San Diego Unified School District were selected: three high implementing Comer Schools, three low implementing Comer schools, and three control schools. Enrollment for the different schools ranged from 450 to 1325 students. The ethnic breakdown of students attending Comer schools is primarily Latino. African American, Southeast Asian, and a small percentage of Caucasian were also represented. Five observers were not informed of a school's status and rotated their visits among the nine schools.

Instruments

This study includes use of two survey instruments, the Comer Visitor Observation and the Comer Survey. The Comer Visitor Observation was developed as an observational tool. Using a five point Likert scale, thirteen observable items of school climate, classroom environment, and parent involvement were identified. The Comer Survey consists of three surveys, one for students (school climate, classroom environment, and social competence), another for staff (school climate and teacher efficacy), and a third for parents (school climate). These surveys are the same surveys used in a five year longitudinal study agreement with the School Development Program at Yale University (see app. A-C).

Analysis

Initially, the data collected from the Comer Visitor Observation was utilized to check categorizing of the nine schools into high implementing, low implementing, and control. A mean was calculated from the five observers' responses to each of the thirteen questions. A mean was also calculated for each individual school. The schools with the three highest means were labeled high implementing Comer Schools. The schools with the three lowest means were categorized as control schools. The remaining schools were classified as low implementing Comer. These groupings were compared with district survey data from from the Comer Survey.

Secondly, the 13 items from the Comer Visitor Observation were matched with individual questions from the Comer (Student, Parent, and Staff) Surveys. The data collected through observation was then correlated with the Comer Student, Parent, and Staff Survey data that was previously administered at each of the school sites by the district.

Findings

Using the Comer Visitor Observation Survey, researchers were able to correctly categorize the nine schools into high implementing Comer, low implementing Comer, and control schools.

Of the forty-one survey questions, 13 of them correlated significantly with the observation data, and ten of those came from the staff surveys. Observation Q13 (evidence of community and parent involvement) compared with Staff Survey QA4 (Parents frequently volunteer on special projects) emerged as the single most significant item identifying the school as a Comer school. Beyond just attending PTA meetings or volunteering at special events, teachers report parents help in the classrooms and visit school on a regular basis. These self-reported data all were triangulated and confirmed through observation.

The following correlations were found between the Comer Visitor Observation and Comer Survey Data:

1. **Observation Question 1: The school has a quiet atmosphere.**

   •Student Student Survey Question E27 --My class is noisy-- p=.105 , r= -.58

2. **Observation Question 2: Generally, the school is well maintained.**

   •Parent Survey Question G38 --Parts of the school are damages-- p=.03 , r=.73
   •Staff Survey Question A77--The school is well maintained-- p=.04 , r= -.68
   •Staff Survey Question A73 --Walls are in good condition-- p=.04 , r=.70
   •Staff Survey Question A70 --Often broken windows and doors-- p=.03 , r=.72
   •Staff Survey Question A59 --Usually clean and tidy-- p=.03 , r=.73

3. **Observation Question 3: The school has a bright and pleasant appearance.**

   •Parent Survey Question G55 --School is in good physical condition-- p=.07 , r=.63
   •Staff Survey Question A67 --Bright and pleasant appearance-- p=.03 , r=.72

4. **Observation Question 13: There is evidence of community and parent involvement.**

   •Staff Survey Question A2 --Parents attend PTA meetings-- p=.05 , r= .66
   •Staff Survey Question A4 --Parents frequently volunteer on special projects-- p=.006 , r=.82
   •Staff Survey Question A6 --Parents rarely attend school activities-- p=.07 , r= -.62
   •Staff Survey Question A15 --Parents frequently volunteer to help in classrooms-- p=.03 , r=.71
   •Staff Survey Question A62 --Parents visit school on a regular basis-- p=.05 , r=.67

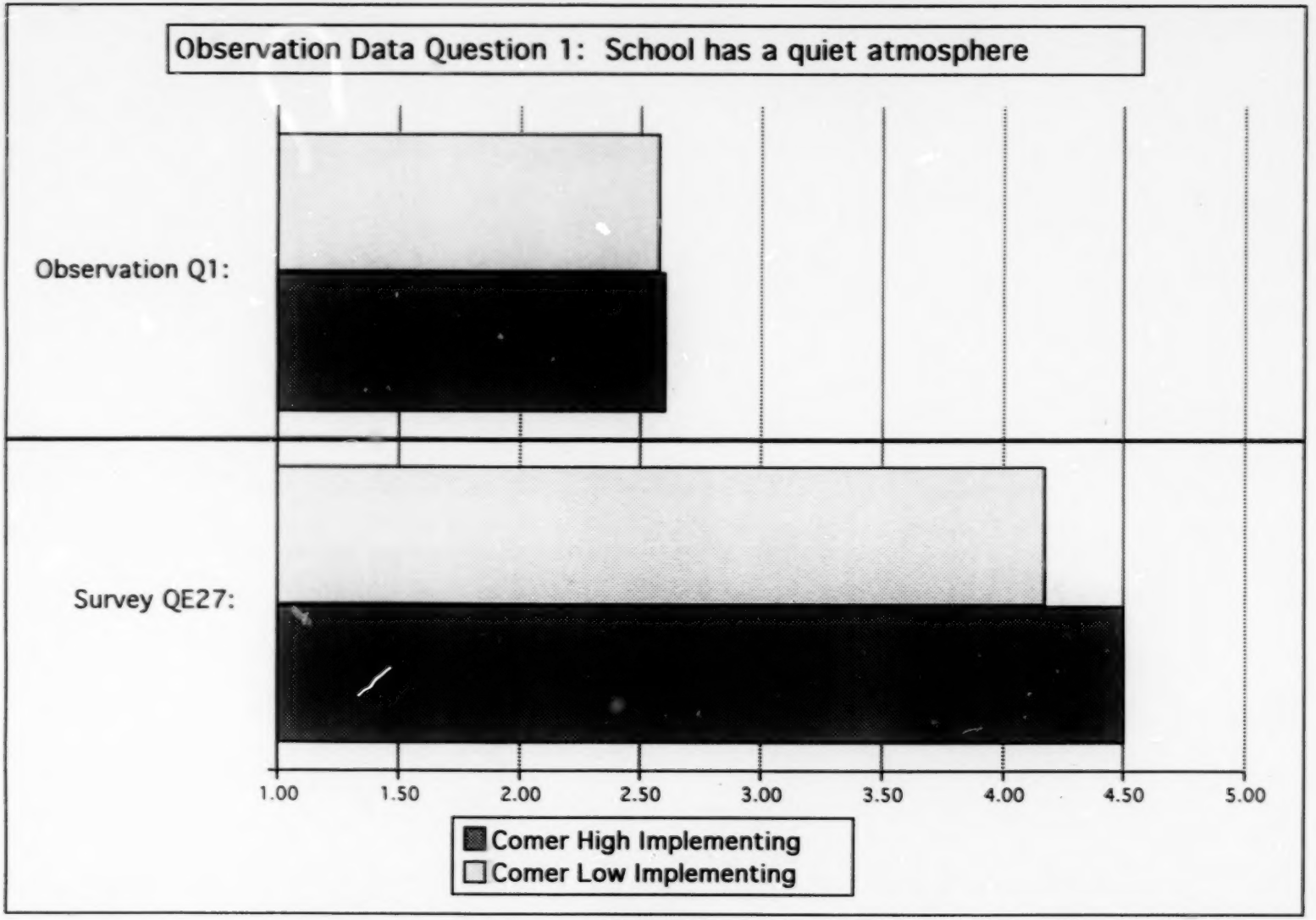
These findings are illustrated in Figures 1-4

Discussion

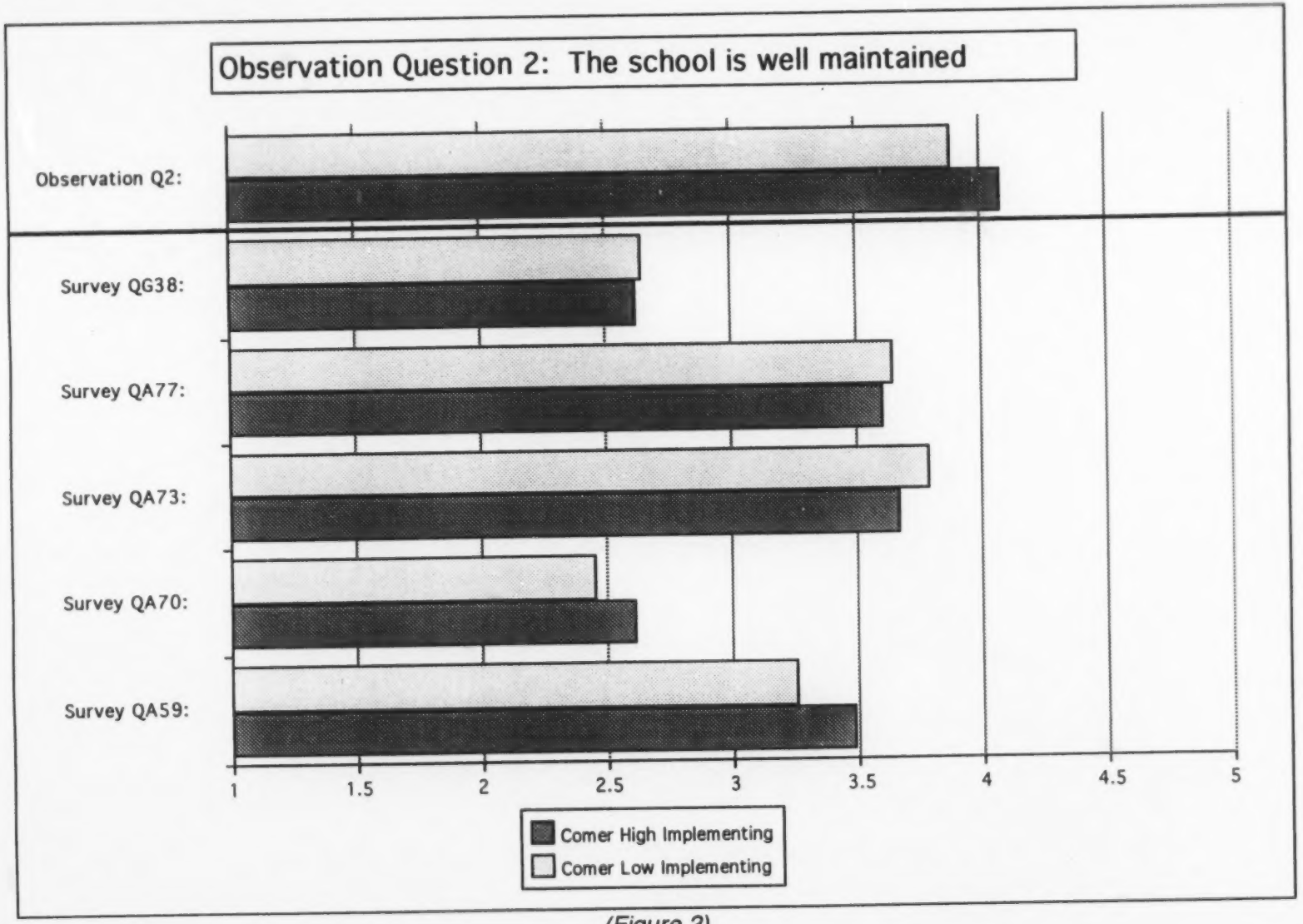
This study illuminates key observable characteristics of schools implementing the Comer School Development Program at a high level. It also expands on the dimensions of parent/community involvement and its importance in contributing to a school's climate and consequential academic success.

An interesting phenomenon occurred in the course of the study. At the time chosen schools were received by observers, there were three high, three low, and three control schools based on the previous years data from the Comer Surveys. The observers confirmed each of these ratings through direct observation. During this observational collection, however, two schools fell from a high to a low implementing school based on the new results of the Comer Surveys. At the time of observation, this shift was not evident. What seems to have occurred was that the internal structure had been altered. At these particular schools, there was a change in administration and an addition of several new teachers not trained in the Comer SDP. This substantiates the fact that the Comer philosophy must be school-wide and when new staff arrives, there is an immediate need to train them in the Comer SDP to enable the school to function as a high implementing Comer School.

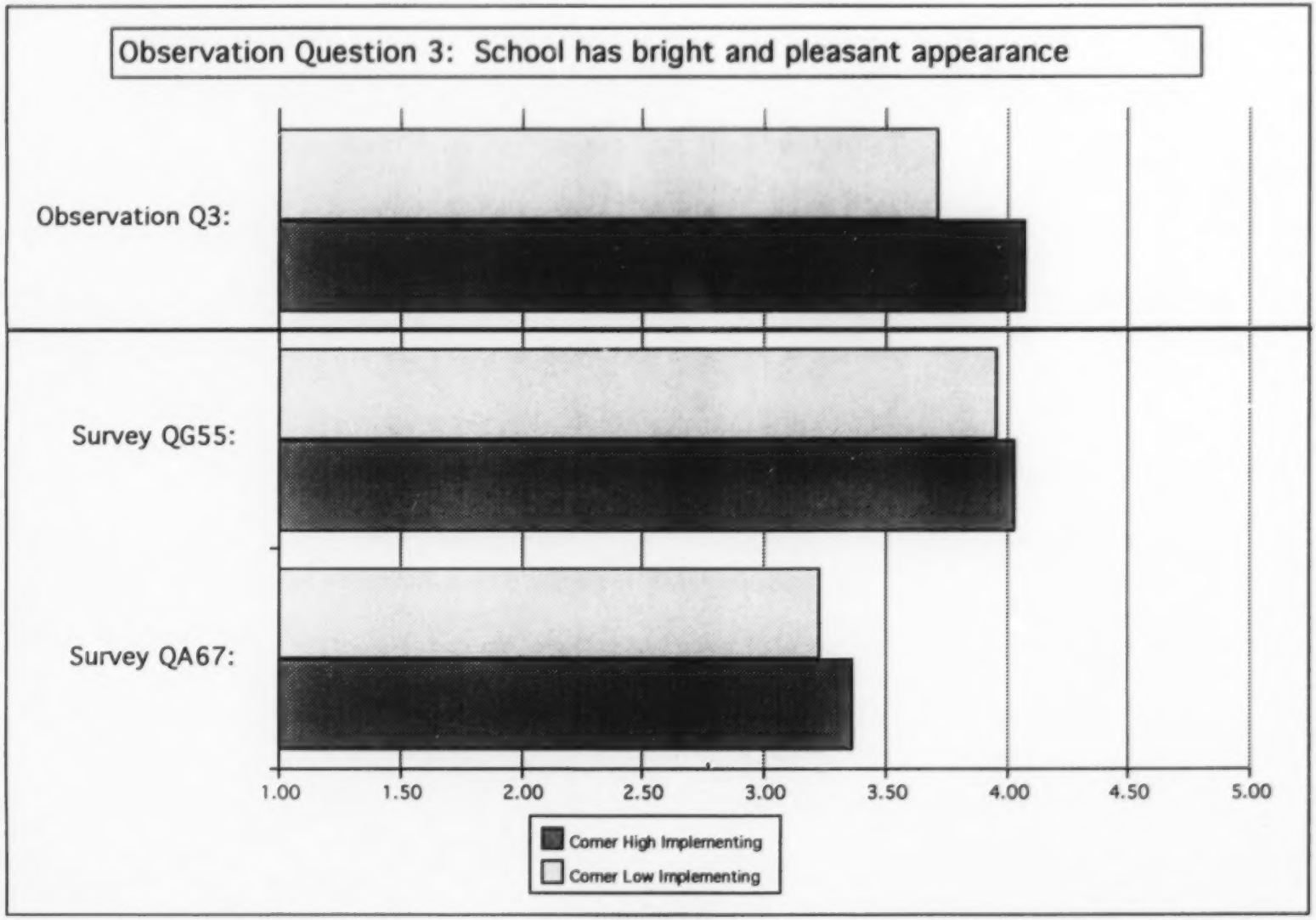
It is also possible that a school could be practicing good teaching and learning methods, including creating a positive school environment, but not be an "official" Comer School. These may have been schools that have come to the same conclusion as Dr. Comer and were implementing good teaching practices.


Observation Data Question 1: School has a quiet atmosphere
Observation Q1:
Survey QE27:
1.00
1.50
2.00
2.50
3.00
3.50
4.00
4.50
5.00
Comer High Implementing
Comer Low Implementing

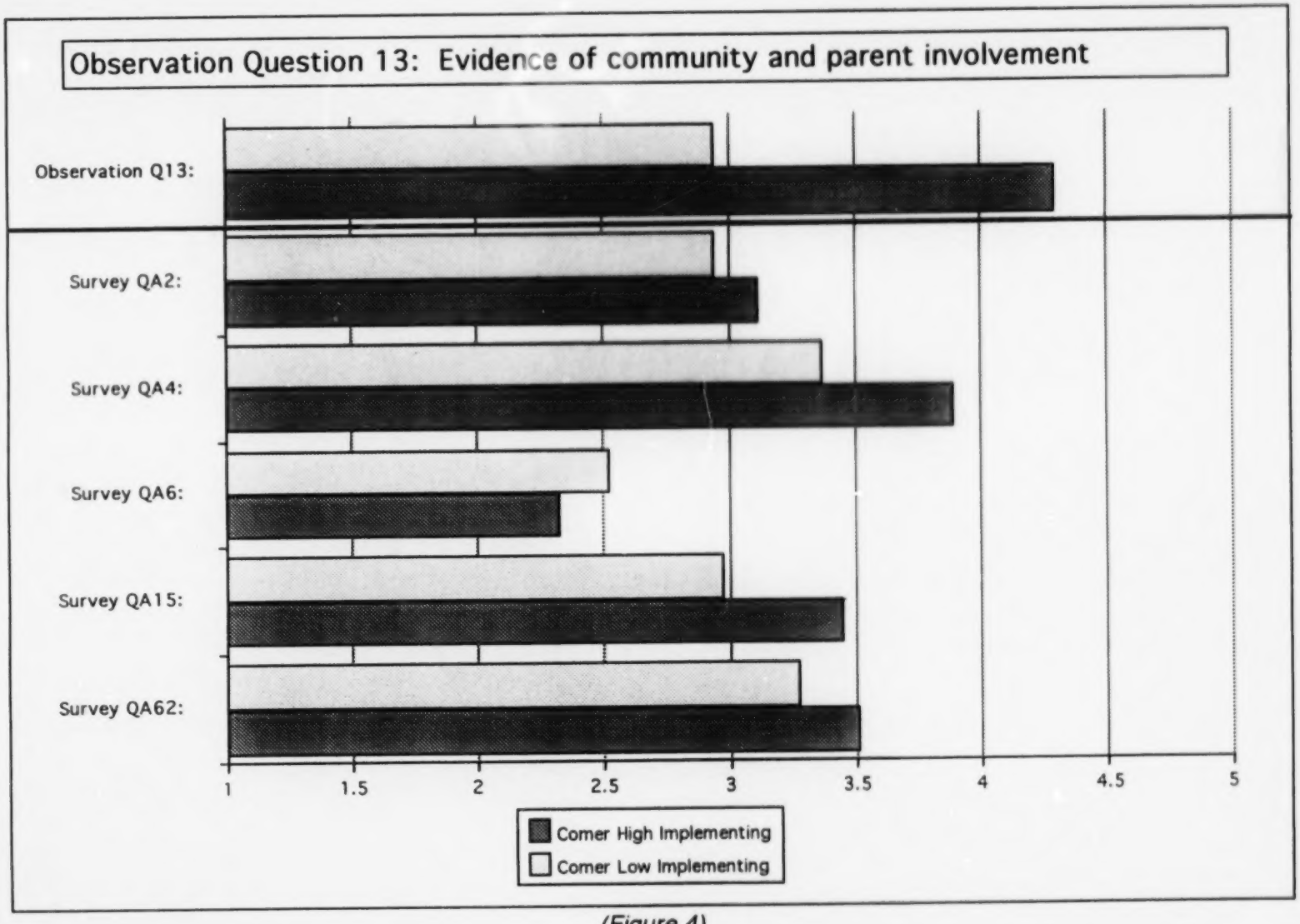
(Figure 1)


Observation Question 2: The school is well maintained
Observation Q2:
Survey QG38:
Survey QA77:
Survey QA73:
Survey QA70:
Survey QA59:
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
Comer High Implementing
Comer Low Implementing

(Figure 2)


Observation Question 3: School has bright and pleasant appearance
Observation Q3:
Survey QG55:
Survey QA67:
1.00
1.50
2.00
2.50
3.00
3.50
4.00
4.50
5.00
Corner High Implementing
Corner Low Implementing

(Figure 3)


Observation Question 13: Evidence of community and parent involvement
Observation Q13:
Survey QA2:
Survey QA4:
Survey QA6:
Survey QA15:
Survey QA62:
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
Comer High Implementing
Comer Low Implementing

(Figure 4)

Comer Visitor Observation

Rate the following questions according to what you observe at the school. Circle the number you feel best describes what you observe. The scale is as follows: 1-nothing, 2-very little, 3-some, 4-quite a bit, 5-a great deal, 6-not observed.

****

School Climate

1. The school has a quiet atmosphere conducive to learning. (Hall activity is directed.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. Generally, the school is well maintained. (No broken windows or doors, chipping paint or graffiti.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. The school has a bright and pleasant appearance. (No trash, gardening is evident, banners displayed.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. The office makes visitors feel welcome. (Warm greeting, smiles, you are noticed.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. There is evidence of the school being a Comer school. (Bulletin boards, child centered banners, parent or community board.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
6. The school has a friendly, welcoming atmosphere. (Obvious while walking around.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
7. Staff welcomes visitors. (Eye contact, smiles, greeting.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
8. Students welcome visitors. 1 2 3 4 5 6
9. The classes are orderly. (Students are on task.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
10. The playground is peaceful. (No obvious conflicts, safety rules are observed.) 1 2 3 4 5 6

Instructional Program

11. Curriculum and materials reflect ethnic and cultural diversity. (Display materials, books, bulletin boards, projects.) 1 2 3 4 5 6
12. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods to help their students learn. (Seating arrangements, displays, centers.) 1 2 3 4 5 6

Parent Involvement

13. There is evidence of community and parent involvement. (Parent room and community board.) 1 2 3 4 5 6

****

School observed:_____ Date_____

Observer_____Time in_____ Time out_____

numbers that correspond directly to original survey: 1,2,3,9,11,12,13

School Climate Survey

A

(School Staff Version)

We would like to know how you feel about your school. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate number and filling in that number for that question on the answer form. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will not be identified by name or classroom.

1. Administrators here respect the teachers.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
2. Parents attend Parent-Teacher Association meetings.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
3. In academic subjects, students are given the same topics every year.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
4. At this school, parents frequently volunteer to help on special projects.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
5. Students are taught new material every year in each subject.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
6. Parents rarely attend school activities.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
7. Students are given opportunities to express their views on important matters.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
8. Community members are unsupportive of school activities.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
9. Teachers are often disrespected by students.
   1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
10. Staff members at this school know the mission statement of the school.
    1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
11. The principal has little contact with the teachers.
    1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
12. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods to help their students learn.
    1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree
13. Community members are unwelcome in the school.
    1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

14. The principal visits teachers' classrooms regularly.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

15. At this school, parents frequently volunteer to help in the classrooms.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

16. Students are treated the same regardless of social class.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

17. Most students here feel that they can learn.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

18. The relationship between the school and the community is good.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

19. Non-teaching staff are asked to help with decisions on school matters.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

20. It is easy to guide the behavior of the students at this school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

21. At this school, students are unfriendly.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

22. The principal provides constructive feedback to teachers about their performance.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

23. The school is usually too noisy.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

24. The school reaches out to the community.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

25. Students here are caring people.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

26. At this school, students help one another.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

27. Few teachers are willing to give students extra lessons after school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

28. Rules are obeyed by students.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

29. The principal sets the direction for this school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

30. Students at this school have good self-control.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

31. Students are treated the same regardless of race.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

32. Staff at this school believe that very few of their students will make it to college.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

33. At this school, staff members agree that there is little hope of a good future for their students.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

34. Male and female students seem to benefit equally well from instructions.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

35. Students at this school do not care about learning.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

36. Students regardless of race seem to benefit equally well from instruction.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

37. Teachers are given opportunities to express their views on important matters.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

38. Male and female students are treated equally well.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

39. There is good discipline at this school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

40. At this school, teachers find ways to motivate their students to learn.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

41. It is clear that the principal facilitates and guides the management process in the school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

42. The behavior of children at this school is good.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

43. This school has a quiet atmosphere conducive to learning.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

44. There is good community involvement in the life of the school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

45. Most staff at this school expect many of their students to go on to college.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

46. Most staff here agree that many students at this school will not complete high school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

47. Rules are frequently broken by students.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

48. The school's administration is sensitive and responsive to the needs of students.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

49. Staff at this school see a bright future for their students.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

50. Few opportunities are available for parents to give their opinions on school matters.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

51. Teachers at this school are committed to helping students learn.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

52. Professional nonteaching staff play an active role in decision-making groups.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

53. Students at this school are unwilling to learn.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

54. Members of the community work closely with school staff to improve the school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

55. This school encourages parent involvement in the day-to-day activities of the school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

56. The principal usually makes decisions concerning the school without consulting teachers.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

57. Non-teaching staff are given opportunities to express their views on important matters.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

58. The same students get chosen every time to participate in after-school or special activities.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

59. This school is usually clean and tidy.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

60. Our students are willing and eager to learn.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

61. Parents are given opportunities to express their views on important matters.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

62. Parents visit the school on a regular basis.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

63. Teachers at this school expect many of their students to pursue some kind of higher education beyond high school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

64. Parts of this school are often flooded.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

65. Students are orderly.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

66. Teachers here believe that their students will be among those who will help to solve problems of the future.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

67. This school has a bright and pleasant appearance.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

68. Some students are treated unfairly by teachers.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

69. This school is a safe place.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

70. There are often broken windows or doors in this school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

71. Students here fight a lot.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

72. Teachers at this school try to make school work exciting for students.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

73. The walls of this school are usually in good condition.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

74. At this school, staff pay attention to students' feelings.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

75. This school is helping the students to develop into well-adjusted human beings.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

76. At this school, teachers make students feel good about themselves.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

77. Generally this school is well maintained.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

78. Teachers at this school generally try to accommodate the different learning styles of the children.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

79. The curriculum and materials used in this school reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of students in this school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Classroom Environment Questionnaire

E

(Elementary School Student Version)

This is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers.

The sentences on this form describe different things about school classes. We'd like to know a little more about how you see your class. Read each sentence carefully. Think about it as you read it. Then, decide whether the sentence (in your opinion) is "Always", "Usually", "Sometimes", or "Never" true of your class. Circle only one answer, and then carefully mark your green answer sheet with the number (either a "1", "2", "3", or "4") above your circled answer.

Your teacher will not be seeing your answers and they will not be shared with others. Remember, it is important that you put down what you really think.

1. We work hard on what we do in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

2. We get to know each other really well in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

3. We spend most of the time in my class on lessons.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

4. In my class, we compete with each other.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

5. My class is orderly.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

6. The rules in my class are clear.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

7. We try out new ideas in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

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8. Students daydream a lot in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

9. In my class, the kids make friends with each other.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

10. My teacher cares about all the kids in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

11. In my class, everyone tries hard to get the best grade.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

12. We're quiet in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

13. Rules in my class change a lot.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

14. If students break rules in my class they get in trouble.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

15. My class is very interesting.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

16. I make lots of friends in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

17. My teacher is like a friend to me.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

18. In my class, we talk more about outside things than about lessons.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

19. Some students in my class try to answer questions first.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

20. We fool around a lot in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

21. We know what will happen if students break the rules in my class.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

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22. My teacher is strict.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

23. Most students really pay attention to what the teacher says.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

24. In my class, it is easy to get a group of students together to do projects.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

25. My teacher tries very hard to help students.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

26. In my class, we compete a lot with each other.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

27. My class is noisy.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

28. My teacher explains what the rules for my class are.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

29. We get in trouble for talking in class when we are not supposed to.

1	2	3	4
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never

Thank you for completing this survey.

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School Climate Survey
(Parent Version)

G

This survey is designed to get the opinions of parents concerning your child's school. We want to know how you feel about your child's school. Your input is very important in helping to better understand the issues related to the school climate. **Your responses are strictly confidential and you will not be identified in any way.** Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement on the survey by circling one of the five responses (please circle only <u>one</u> response). Then mark the green answer sheet with the number (1 through 5) of the response that you have selected.

1. The principal and other administrators of my child's school respect the teachers.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

2. My child is taught new material every year in each subject.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

3. At my child's school, teachers make sure that the children can read well.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

4. At my child's school, teachers make sure that the children can write well.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

5. I do not often attend school activities.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

6 Community members work with staff at my child's school to help improve the school.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

7. My child's school is strong in academics.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

8. At my child's school, there is little chance for teachers to share their views on school matters.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

9. My child's school reaches out to the community.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

10. My child is respected by the teachers.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

11. Parents at my child's school often visit the school.
   1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not Sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

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12. My child believes that he/she can do well in school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

13. Staff at my child's school have frequent contact with the children outside the school setting.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

14. Most staff at my child's school are aware of our concerns in the community.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

15. I often visit my child's school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

16. The relationship between my child's school and the community is good.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

17. At my child's school, parents take an active part in making school decisions.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

18. Teachers at my child's school encourage me to visit the school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

19. My child's school has a high standard of work.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

20. My child trusts the teachers.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

21. At my child's school, the principal alone usually makes decisions concerning the school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

22. I usually attend Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) or other parent organization meetings at my child's school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

23. Teachers at my child's school help my child with school problems.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

24. At my child's school, I have the chance to give my views on school matters.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

25. I often help with special school projects (for example: bus trips, fund-raising).

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

26. At my child's school, parents have a great deal of confidence in the school staff.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

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42. At my child's school, the principal and other administrators respect the non-teaching staff.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

43. The children at my child's school are caring people.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

44. There are often broken windows or doors in my child's school.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

45. My child likes to go to school.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

46. At my child's school, the principal and other administrators care about the needs of the children.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

47. The walls of my child's school are usually in good condition.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

48. My child has the opportunity to give his/her opinions on school matters.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

49. At my child's school, all staff members help to make decisions about school matters.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

50. The teachers make sure that my child can do his/her work well.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

51. I make sure my child does his/her homework.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

52. At this school, teachers pay attention to my child's feelings.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

53. At this school, teachers help my child feel good about himself/herself.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

54. This school is helping my child to develop into a well-adjusted person.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

55. My child's school is kept in good physical condition.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

We appreciate your taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. Thank you.

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27. Many parents attend Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) or other parent organization meetings at my child's school.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

28. My child feels that he/she can learn at this school.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

29. At my child's school, teachers help to make decisions about the school.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

30. Most students at my child's school enjoy reading.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

31. At my child's school, the principal and other administrators show consideration for teachers.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

32. My child is willing to learn at school.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

33. At my child's school, the principal and other administrators care about the needs of parents.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

34. My child does not care about learning.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

35. My child's school is usually clean and tidy.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

36. Teachers at my child's school are respected by the principal and other administrators.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

37. Children at my child's school do not want to learn.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

38. Parts of this school are often damaged.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

39. We parents believe that the principal and other administrators will do the best for our children.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

40. There is good community involvement in my child's school.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

41. My child's school has a bright and pleasant appearance.

1 Strongly Agree | 2 Agree | 3 Not Sure | 4 Disagree | 5 Strongly Disagree

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